USDA NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Integrated Accountability System

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Integrated Accountability System

IAS Next Generation

FSA Compliance Status Reviews (Version 2.0.)

March 2005

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Errata Sheet

The CSR guide is in initial draft form. Revisions will be noted as it progresses:

- Initial draft prepared (12/31/2003).
- Updated for 2005 application (3/10/2005)

General

Compliance reviews are conducted on a yearly basis with a national sample of farm tracts provided to the States. The national sample of farm tracts is derived from records kept by the Farm Service Agency in a Kansas City mainframe. The sample size is approximately 1 percent of the farm tracts that receive a farm payment in the past year and contain cropland. The tracts are provided to the States on January 1 and they can conduct the compliance review at any time during the year. The compliance review determinations must be available to NHQ by December 1.

The States have the obligation to add additional farm tracts to the sample set according to the 1985 Food Security Act Manual. The compliance review determination is selected from a list of 12 HEL and 3 Wetlands determinations. Other information collected by the tracking system are the time spent conducting the review, the number of acres in the tract, and the category identifying why the tract was reviewed.

Compliance reviews are conducted to ensure that farms receiving commodity payments are implementing and/or maintaining conservation practices.

Accessing FSA Compliance Reviews and other IAS applications

Currently, the Compliance Review program is used by NRCS employees to record FSA Compliance Status Reviews

There are some requirements for setting your browser (IE6) correctly to run Compliance Reviews. Do the following:
1. Select **Tools** on the browser window.
2. Select **Internet Options**.
3. Click the **Security Tab**.
4. Choose **Custom Level** and then **Miscellaneous**.
5. Find "Access data sources across domains."
6. Set it to Enable.

After making these browser adjustments, CSR is accessed through a link at the "Accountability" tab IAS apps section or the "Field Tools" tab Accountability section at my.nrcs or from the IAS Home Page.

Obtaining an eGov account through eAuth

You must have an eGovernment Account to access IAS applications. NRCS employees use the same login and password for Compliance Reviews that they use for WebTCAS. Select FSA Compliance Reviews from my.NRCS, Accountability or from the IAS Home Page.

Data Entry

Using the Compliance Tracts Worklist

The worklist is intended to provide a quick method of finding and completing tract records selected for review.

1. On the Data Entry menu, select **Tract Worklist**.
2. The list will default to the states in your profile. Select the set of records you wish to work with by choosing options from the drop-down lists at the top of the screen. At a minimum, you must select one state. Refer to the description of selection filters below:
3. Click **Search** to generate the worklist.
4. Once the list is displayed, click the FSA Tract number of the record you wish to review.

Selection filters

There are several selection filters. You must select a state, if you have multiple states in your profile. Other selection criteria are optional. The more criteria you specify, the shorter your list will be.

Review Year: The Review Year is preset to the current review year for state and field personnel.

State: Due to the volume of records, only records for one state can be viewed at a time.

Administrative County: Select one or all counties for the State to list tracts located in each county identified by FIPS code in the sample data.

Category: Category identifies the reason the tract was selected for review. The following categories exist:

R   tract selected by NRCS from the NCC based on a random sample
V   tract added due to a prior year variance.
U   tract owned or operated by a USDA employee.
A   tract added due to a reinstatement request, tract referred by another USDA agency, whistleblowers, potential violations observed by NRCS, or other additions.
T   technical assistance variance
W   tract added by State identifying a wetlands tract for review.
M   replacement tract for an invalid or not found tract in the sample data or a replacement tract for an NN or NC determination.

Note: Categories R and V are made available by NHQ. Categories U, A, T, W, and M are choices for additional tracts entered by State or Field offices.

Review status: Description of the four tract statuses listed below. All are generated by the application based on the described conditions.

Incomplete: Status assigned to records that do not have all visible data fields completed on the data entry form.
Complete: When all required fields on the record have been completed and saved, Tract Status is changed to Complete. If required field data is deleted on a later edit, the record will be reset to Incomplete.
Replaced: This is a type of Complete Record. When a tract is assigned a new tract number(s) and saved, the original tract is marked replaced. The new tract number generates a new record in the worklist.
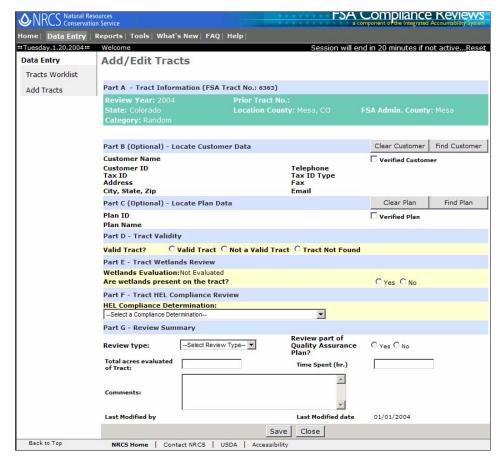**New:**   This identifies all sample tract records. A new record is generated as a result of a Tract reconstitution / replacement condition, or new tract added by the field or State office. When the record is edited and saved, it is changed to Incomplete or Complete as appropriate.

FSA Tract number: List a specific tract by entering the FSA Tract number.

Completing the Tract Review Form

The Tract Review data entry form has several parts.

Part A – Tract Information   This section displays tract information the user receives as part of the random sample, or information the user is required to enter when adding a tract.

Part B – (Optional) Locate Customer Information   This section associates customer information with the tract. Preliminary information is input based on SCIMS customer information associated with the tract.

Part C – (Optional) Locate Plan Information This section associates plan information in Toolkit with the tract.

Part D – **Tract Validity**   This section records whether the tract is still valid. If the tract is not valid, additional information is required to explain why not.

Part E – **Tract Wetlands Review**   This section records whether wetlands conditions are present on the tract. If so, additional information is required to determine compliance.

Part F – **Tract HEL Compliance Review**   This section records the HEL compliance determination. If the determination code is 'Plan Not Needed' or 'Compliance Review Not Completed' additional explanation must be given.

Part G – **Review Summary**   This section records overall review results. All fields, except comments, must be filled and saved before the review is marked as complete.

Tract Review Form Data Entry Parts:

Tract Information

Tract information is supplied from the FSA database for records generated in the random sample. Tract information is entered through the Add Tract option for records added by state personnel.
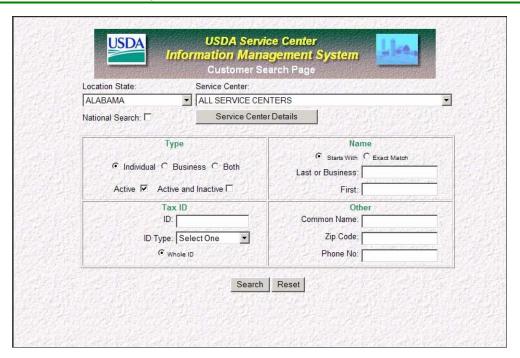

Locate Customer Information

Customer Information is pulled from the customer database (SCIMS), if possible. Now that a centralized database will allow multiple years of data to be stored, custormer information can be entered for future reference. This is intended to save field personnel research time, when they are recording information for tracts they expect to encounter in the following years' reviews. For example, rereview may be required on tracts with violations, variances, or ownership by USDA employees.

If customer data can be associated with the tract, it will be displayed. Check the verified customer box to associate the name(s) with the tract. If customer data is not displayed or the wrong names are listed, you can clear the current information and you can use the Find Customer button to find the customer information. It will take you to the Customer Database (SCIMS).
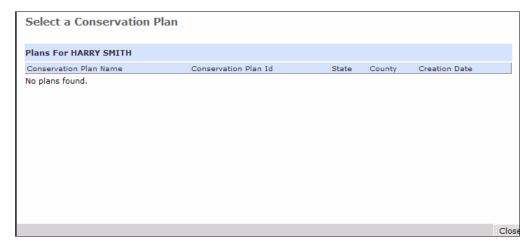
Locate Plan Data

If only one plan exists in Toolkit for a customer, it will be shown. If multiple plans exist, click the Find Plan button. Again, this is optional information to save research time in future years.

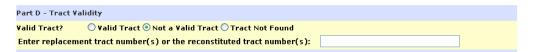When you click the Find Plan button, a popup is presented to allow plan selection.

Click the Plan ID to associate the plan with the record. If no plans are associated, they may not exist in the Toolkit database.

Tract Validity

The Tract Validity section initially contains one question: Valid Tract? There are three possible responses: Valid Tract, Not a Valid Tract, or Tract Not Found. Mark the corresponding radio button. If the tract is valid, no further information needs to be completed in this section. If the tract is not valid, or not found, the section expands and additional fields must be completed.

1. Answer the Valid Tract? If valid tract is selected, skip to Wetlands Review. If other buttons are selected continue with step 2.
2. Enter either a replacement tract number or if a reconstitution occurred on the land, enter the new tract number.
3. If a tract number is placed in this field, then click the save button at the bottom of the page. Saving the record will mark this sample tract as replaced and the entered tract number will be added as a new record in the tract worklist.

Wetlands Review

The Wetlands Review section initially contains one question: Are wetlands present on the Tract? If wetlands are present, the section expands and additional questions must be completed.

1. Indicate presence of wetlands or hydric soils by marking Yes or No. If no, go to Compliance Review section. If yes, continue with step 2.
   Note: The Wetlands Determination code is automatically set based on responses to the questions. Possible determinations are: NW—no wetlands, NWV—no wetlands violation, or PV—possible wetlands violation.
2. Indicate whether there is a potential violation by marking Yes or No.
3. If a potential violation exists, use the comments box to explain it.

Note: If Part E is answered No wetlands and Part F has an "NN - …" or "NC - …", then the sample tract should be replaced with a tract that has wetlands conditions or HEL.
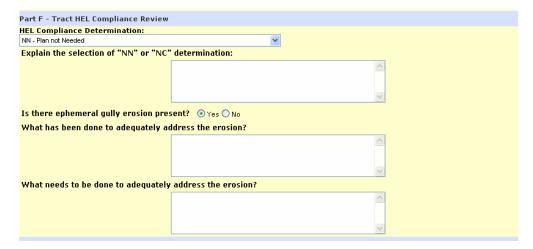
HEL Compliance Review

The Compliance Review section initially contains only a drop-down box from which the determination code is selected. The possible codes are described below.

Determination codes:

AA   Actively applying an approved conservation plan – An approved conservation plan is being applied on all HEL fields on the tract, or an approved conservation plan is being applied on some HEL fields on the tract, and the previously treated HEL field(s) is/are using an approved conservation system, or systems.

AC   Variance because of severe and unusual conditions - Applying an approved conservation plan, or using an approved conservation system with a temporary variance. The temporary variance should be due to special conditions, including severe weather, pests, or disease which prohibited or changed the application of the required scheduled conservation practices.

AE   Variance because of economic hardship – Applying an approved conservation plan or using an approved conservation system with an exemption based on economic hardship as determined by the FSA County Committee and approved by the State Committee.

AG   Exemption based on a Good Faith Determination – Applying an approved conservation system with an exemption based on a good faith determination by the FSA County Committee.

AH   Variance because of extreme personal hardship – Applying an approved conservation plan or using an approved conservation system with a variance because of a special problem, technical error, incorrect plan, or unusual occurrence prohibited the application of the required scheduled practices(s).

AM   Variance with a minimal or technical effect – Applying an approved or an approved conservation system with a variance based on failure which is technical and minor in nature.

CA   Conditionally applying an approved conservation plan or system.

EX   Used for tracts where the review is limited to a specific field either from a prior year variance or agency referral

NA   Not actively applying an approved conservation plan or using an approved conservation system.

NC   Compliance Review Not Coducted. There may be circumstances that didn't allow the review to be conducted.

NN   No conservation plan is required. There are no HEL fields on the tract, or the tract is not planted to an agricultural commodity, or the tract is not in agriculture use

TA   Exemption(s) used for tract(s) when deficiencies are found while providing technical assistance.

UA   All of the conservation plan practices, or the approved conservation systems are being maintained to the required specifications and standards

1. Select a determination from the drop-down list. If the determination code is 'Plan not needed', (NN), or 'Compliance Review Not Conducted', (NC), the section will expand.
2. Enter comments explaining why a plan is not needed or a review was not conducted.
3. Answer the question on ephemeral gully erosion. A "Yes" answer expands the section and asks for explanation about addressing the erosion.

Review Summary

Several fields must be completed before the tract review is considered complete.

1. Select Review Type, Partial or Full, from the drop-down list. Partial review is used for tracts that received a variance last year or whistleblower complaint.
2. Crop Year records the actual field crop year of harvesting.
3. Was review part of a state quality assurance plan? Mark Yes or No.
4. Enter total acres on the tract that was reviewed.
5. Enter time spent conducting the review.
6. Enter any comments pertinent to the findings.
7. Answer the question about a contract being active on the tract.
8. Last Modified information will be entered automatically based on user login.
9. Click **Save**.
10. The Tracts Worklist is redisplayed. You can check the tract Review Status to determine whether the tract is complete as saved. A complete status only occurs when all displayed data fields in sections D through G have information.

Save can be pressed at any time to save data just entered.

Adding a Tract

The system has mechanisms for creating new tracts when a tract is marked as replaced. It can also determine those tracts that had violations in the previous year. Consequently, it will not be necessary to add as many tracts at the state level. However, there will be some instances when the Add Tract option must be used. For instance, adding tracts for employee reviews, loan recipients, whistleblower, etc.

1. Click **Add Tract** on the Data Entry page or on the header bar for the Tracts Worklist.
2. Review Year defaults to current year.
3. Enter the State (only states in your user profile can be entered).
4. Enter the Administrative County from list (office conducting the review may vary from the tract location in some states).
5. Enter the Location County by selecting from the list.
6. Enter the FSA Tract Number.
7. Enter the Previous Tract Number, if any.
8. Select the Category from the drop-down list.
   Note: R (random) is not a valid code for manually entered tracts.
   Category: Category identifies the reason the tract was selected for review. The following categories exist:
   U tract owned or operated by a USDA employee.
   V tract added due to a prior year variance.
   A tract added due to a reinstatement requested, tract referred by another USDA agency, whistleblowers, potential violations observed by NRCS, or other additions.
   T technical assistance variance
   W tract added by State identifying a wetlands tract for review.
   M replacement tract for an invalid or not found tract in the sample data or a replacement tract for an NN or NC determination with no wetlands. (This category is automatically generated by program, not in the selection list.)
9. Click **Save**. The Edit Tract page will be displayed for you to continue with entry of review detail.
10. Complete the Edit Tract page as described in **Completing the Tract Review Form**. Tracts added by the State or field office can be deleted by clicking the Delete button at the bottom of the data entry form.

Tools

The tools menu has basic options pertinent to Compliance Status Reviews and other IAS applications. Not all options appear on all users menus. All options are discussed. If you need information from an application that you do not have access to, contact your state coordinator.

Two options are displayed on the left side of the screen, My Profile and My Account.

My Profile   shows the assigned state and county(s) based on your eAuth login which should be based on your office location. This profile is the same for all IAS applications. If an employee moves, the profile can be changed by the user by clicking on this selection and adding a new profile by selecting the Add button. The new profile can be designated as the default and the user can delete the old profile.

My Account   Provides information about the user's login, phone number, e-mail, address, and then lists the IAS systems that the user has access to along with any role assigned them in the application. Changes to this information must be made through the appropriate State or National IAS coordinator.

Reports

Several reports will be created for the FSA Compliance Reviews. The reports will assist you in seeing what tract reviews are still outstanding, what determinations have been found, and what percentage of your review workload is complete at any time throughout the year.

The same reports will be available on both a county and statewide basis for State Coordinators. These reports and additional reports will be available to the National Coordinator.

To properly print these reports you need to check the following setting on your web browser to enable proper formatting on the printed reports. 1. Goto the Tools menu. 2. Goto the Internet Options menu item. 3. Select the advanced tab. 4. Scroll down to the printing section. 5. A Check should be in the Print background colors and images option.

The following reports are implemented in the web application

Compliance Record Report:

To print the compliance record report,
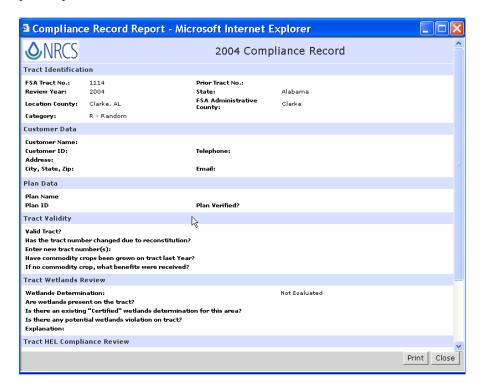>   Select the State
>   Select the county
>   It is optional to select the review status and category

After making the above selections and pressing Search, a worklist for the county appears. Select the word report in the left column to generate the compliance record report for the tract number in the row you selected.

If the review is completed, all findings will be printed on the tract report and this can be used for office records or farm files. If the review is not completed, the report will print the blank report that could be used as a guide in conducting the field review.

A sample report is shown below. This report should always be printed in the default printer portrait format.

After selecting other reports in the menu, the user sees the screen below and is allowed to choose the year, State, and county for the report. If no county is selected, the user gets a report of all tracts in all counties in the State.
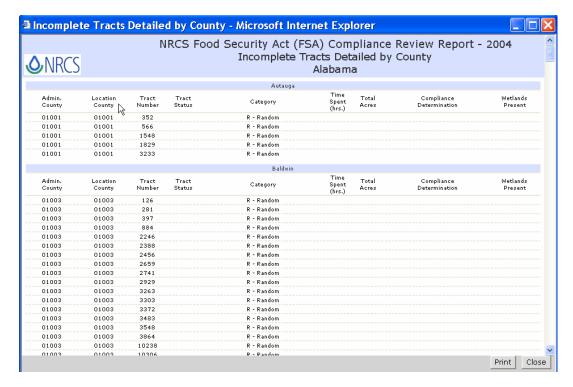

These reports need to be printed in landscape format which requires the user to set the printer options to landscape before sending the report to print.

The tracts by county reports display the fields of administrative county, location county fips, tract number, tract status, category, Total hours time, total acres, compliance determination (HEL), and wetlands present. The wetlands present indicates the answer to the first question in section E.
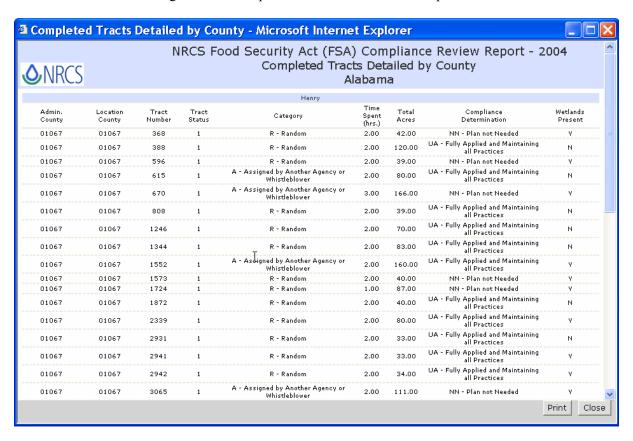
Incomplete Tracts by County Report

The incomplete tracts report can be used by the county reviewer to see all the tracts in their worklist for the current year. The incomplete list is generated by selecting all tracts that have a blank compliance determination field. This listing does not correspond to the tract status of incomplete. It should show all tract status of new, incomplete, or replaced. At the end of the year, only replaced status should be on this report.

Completed Tracts by County Report

The completed tracts report can be used by the county reviewer to see all the completed tracts in their worklist with summary data for the current year. The completed list is generated by selecting all tracts that have a non-blank compliance determination field. This listing should correspond to the tract status of complete.
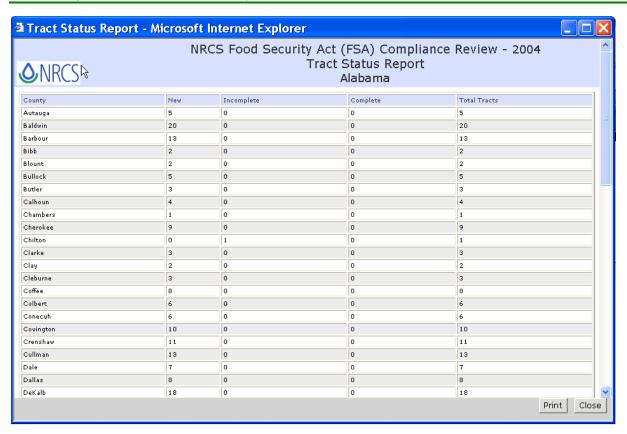

Tract Status Report

The tracts status report provides a summary count of tracts in each of the four status categories. The categories are New, Incomplete, Replaced, and Complete.
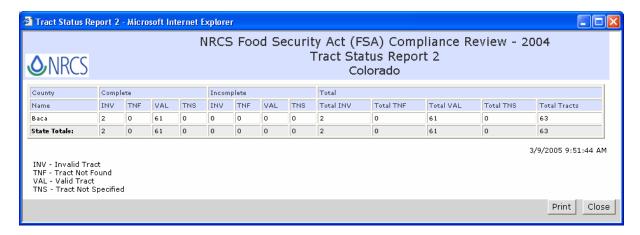
The print setup should be set for landscape for printing the tract status report. The bottom line on the report will total all the columns for the State.

Tract Status Report 2:

This report counts the tracts in all counties or one selected county in a state and shows the tract validation selected by the user. The columns are defined at the bottom of the report. INV means invalid tract, TNF means tract not found, VAL means valid tract, and TNS means Part D has not been completed on the data form. Replaced tracts will be counted in the Total INV or TNF columns.
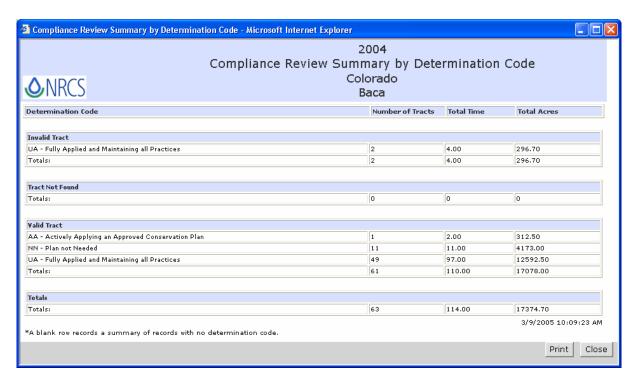
Compliance Review Summary by Determination Code:

> This report shows the determination codes recorded on the reviews by one county or summarized for the State. It records the code used and counts the number of tracts, sums the total hours, and total acres. This report counts only the tracts with a completed status. Invalid tracts and tracts not found should not have completed tract status since a review should not have been conducted on an invalid tract and if a tract is not found, no review can be conducted.
>
> Coordinators should be monitoring this report as reviews are conducted to correct the Part D or E data sections.

HELC Violation (Whistleblower):

> This report generates a Word document that must be saved to your computer and then opened in Word. The report contains standard clauses for notifying a landowner that a violation has been found on the tract.

HELC Violation (Non-whistleblower):

> This report generates a Word document that must be saved to your computer and then opened in Word. The report contains standard clauses for notifying a landowner that a violation has been found on the tract.

Wetlands Violation:

> This report generates a Word document that must be saved to your computer and then opened in Word. The report contains standard clauses for notifying a landowner that a violation has been found on the tract.

Additional Reports:

More reports will be developed and implemented based on the needs of the users.